



# Department of Justice

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## **FLEMING WOMAN INDICTED FOR FRAUD, TAX CRIMES**

COLUMBUS –A federal grand jury here today indicted Erin M. Stewart, age 33, of Fleming, Ohio, charging her with five counts of wire fraud and three counts of filing false income tax returns alleging that she defrauded her mother out of more than \$400,000 over a twelve-year period.

Gregory G. Lockhart, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio and Jose Gonzalez, Special Agent in Charge, Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation announced the indictment which was returned today.

The indictment alleges that, beginning in April 1995, Stewart knowingly devised a scheme to defraud her mother, and to obtain her mother's money and property by means of false and fraudulent pretenses, representations and promises.

On April 4, 1995, Stewart was given her mother's power-of-attorney generally for the purposes of providing financial support for her mother, to assist in the preparation of true and accurate income tax returns on behalf of her mother, to pay proper taxes for her mother, and otherwise to faithfully attend to various accounts and business arrangements for the benefit of her mother.

The indictment alleges that Stewart withdrew money from her mother's accounts saying that she was using the money for her mother's benefit, but instead used the money to buy various items including automobiles, boats, and real estate, and also to pay debts of her husband's business.

The indictment also alleges that Stewart filed false income tax returns by not reporting the income from her mother to the IRS on her income tax returns for 2000 through 2002.

Wire fraud is punishable by up to 30 years imprisonment and a \$1 million fine. Filing a false income tax return is punishable by up to three years imprisonment and a \$100,000 fine.

Lockhart commended the investigation by IRS Criminal Investigation agents and Assistant U.S. Attorney Dan Brown, who is prosecuting the case.

An indictment is merely an accusation. A defendant is presumed innocent until and unless convicted in court.

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